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Sen. Cassis seeks answers to privacy concerns raised by the handling of confidential information

LANSING – State Sen. Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, is calling on the state Department of Information Technology once again to explain what they are doing about a recent audit that revealed vulnerabilities in the way residents' information is secured.

To date, two different released audits have shown that Michigan state government mainframe computer systems containing information on thousands of records maintained by the departments of Information Technology are not effectively secure.

“The results of these audits raise serious questions about how the Department of Information Technology cares for confidential information – yours and mine,” Cassis said.

Cassis plans to have representatives from both the Department of Treasury and Information Technology testify before the Senate Finance Committee by the end of this month. Compliance issues are still outstanding from the original audit released June 2003. The goals of the hearing will be to ask the departments what they have done and what steps they have taken to improve the security and safety of citizens' private information. The expectation is that concrete deadlines for compliance should be put in place.

As a leader continuing to fight for protection of citizens' confidential information, she has also sponsored legislation that would protect Social Security numbers from identity theft. Senate Bill 795 is currently before the state House Criminal Justice Committee and is scheduled to be taken up this fall.

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